

The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY
THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

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PROTECTING SHADOWS.

I sit beneath the elm's protecting shadow,
Whose graceful form
Shelters from sunshine warm;
While far around me, in the heated meadow,
The busy insects swarm.
Better than any roof these softly swaying
leaves,
Opening and closing to the passing air,
Which from afar the fragrant breath receives
Of forest odors rare.
And, as the branches sway,
Revealing depths on depths of heavenly blue,
The tempered rays of sunshine, glancing
through
In flickering spots of light, around me play;
While little birds dart through the mazy web,
With happy chirp and song,
Fearing no wrong,
To their half-hidden nests above my head.
Thus, without motion, without speech or
sound,
I rest,—a part of all this life around.

Beneath the shadow of the Great Protection
The soul sits, hushed and calm.
Bathed in the peace of that divine affection
No fever-heats of life or dull dejection
Can work the spirit harm.
Diviner heavens above
Look down on it in love.
And, as the varying winds move where they
will,

In whispers soft, through trackless fields of
air,

So comes the Spirit's breath, serene and still,
Its tender messages of love to bear
From men of every race and speech and zone,
Making the whole world one;
Till every sword shall to a sickle bend,
And the long, weary strifes of earth shall end.
Be happy, then, my heart,
That thou in all hast part,—

In all these outward gifts of time and sense,
In all the spirit's nobler influence,
In sun and snow and storm;

In the vast life which flows through sea and
sky,

Through every changing form
Whose beauty soon must die;

In the things seen, which ever pass away;

In things unseen, which shall forever stay;
In the Eternal Love

That lifts the soul above

All earthly passion, grief, remorse, and care
Which lower life must bear.

Be happy now and ever,

Since from the Love divine no power the
soul shall sever:

For not our feeble nor our stormy past,
Nor shadows from the future backward cast;
Not all the gulfs of evil far below,
Nor mountain-peaks of good which soar on
high

Into the unstained sky,

Nor any power the universe can know;
Not the vast laws to whose control is given
The blades of grass just springing from the
sod,

And stars within the unsounded depths of
heaven,—

Can touch the spirit hid with Christ in God.
For nought that he has made, below, above,
Can part us from his love.

—*James Freeman Clarke, April 4, 1888.*

NOT UNCLOTHED, BUT CLOTHED UPON.

2 CORINTHIANS V. 4.—"Not that we be unclothed, but
clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of
life."

The doctrine of this text is that we do
not wish to be disembodied spirits here-
after, but to have another higher body su-
perinduced on this. I think the phrase in-
dicates a desire for a process of gradual
development instead of a sudden change,

and that death does not mean that the soul has lost its body, but that a finer and more spiritual one shall be developed around the soul.

The body, in this passage, is first compared to a tabernacle—that is, a tent—and then to a building. The apostle means to say that the present body is like a tent, which is a mere transient residence: the body which is to be is like a house or temple, meant to stand for a hundred or a thousand years. Perhaps there flitted through his mind the idea of the Jewish tabernacle, or church tent, which the Jews carried with them through the wilderness,—a sort of travelling church, a movable chapel, where they had their sacrificial worship every day, which was so made that it could be taken to pieces and put up again. The present body is like that. The body to come is like the Temple of Solomon on Mount Moriah, built of solid marble, immovable, incorruptible, undecaying.

No doubt the corruptible body weighs down the soul. In one point of view there is no correspondence between them. They are deadly foes. Here is a poor soul struggling to reach some truth, some beauty, some love, some goodness, and it is imprisoned in a body which will not let it do so. The bodily organization is dull and heavy, is unvivacious, unrefined. It tends to irritability and wilfulness instead of sweetness and beauty. It is a tragedy in which we are all actors. The soul aspires, the body drags it down. We have gleams of heaven, we are caught up to God, and presently we find ourselves far down, with thick clouds of earthly gloom and mist between us. We have the treasure, but we have it in earthen vessels.

Nevertheless, the body is, with all its defects, the *clothing* for the soul. All *clothing* does, in some sort, begin to correspond with the wearer, and to express a little his tastes and ideas. We see a man's mind somewhat in his dress, just as we see it a little in his handwriting, in the way in which he speaks or walks, in the church he attends, the profession he chooses. These signs may sometimes fail, still they are signs. So there is a truth in the sciences of physiognomy and phrenology, though we may fail to understand them. The body has some kind of correspondence with the mind.

Thus the human body has some sort of analogy to the soul that wears it. You look at a face, you hear a voice, you see the gestures, and an impression is made on you of character. That impression is often the best and most reliable means of knowing

a man's character. It is spontaneous. It shows it, whether he will or not. He may try to conceal his purpose, but it speaks from his eye, it gives inflection to his voice, it inspires involuntary distrust. There is something false and hollow in the sound of this man's words, because his intention is false and hollow. There is something convincing in this other man's speech, apart from what he says. It is the sincere tone, the truthful emphasis, the inflection born not of the rhetorician's teachings, but of the pure soul itself. Men judge others by their actions. Women, more sensitive to the slighter influences, judge people by the impression received from them. They are very apt to be right in their judgment, for this impression is the effluence of the total nature, which we cannot make and cannot hinder, and which tells the story better than words.

Some persons argue as though this body were all bad, and say that in heaven we shall have none, but be floating about the universe, pure disembodied spirits. Paul does not say *that*. He says the opposite: body is to remain, but the mortal part of it is to be swallowed up of life. Body, even in its lowest form, is a mystery of wonder. The human body is the most wonderful and beautiful thing on earth. It is a muddy vesture of decay, but it is also a transparent veil through which the soul shines. Look at it in little children, before it is degraded by toil or sin. What grace and charm in their looks and motions! See it in its ideal forms in the statues of Greece. What grandeur and dignity in the Apollo of the Vatican! What overflowing grace in the Amazon of the Capitol or the Flora of Naples! Now these forms give us hints of a more idealized and higher beauty. In the future life the body, "vital in every part, cannot but by annihilating die." Sown in corruption, it rises incorruptible. Sown mortal, it rises immortal. Sown weakest of all earthly creatures, needing clothing to keep out cold and houses to protect it from weather, unable to move through water like the fish, through air like the bird, behold, it rises into *power*, perhaps fleetier than the electric current, more luminous with thought than the sun with light, yet a body still, the *human* body still. Not unclothed, but clothed upon, mortality swallowed up of life.

A soul sheathed in a crystal shrine,
Through which all its bright features shine;
A soul whose intellectual beams
No mists do mask, no hazy steams;
A happy soul, that, all the way
To heaven, hath a summer's day.

The Christian view of all growth and progress is by addition, not subtraction; by building up, not pulling down; by positive means, not negative; by attraction, not repulsion; by love of good, not fear of evil; by hope of heaven, not terror of hell; by power of love, not power of law; by Christ as a forgiving and saving friend, saying, "Neither do I condemn thee, go and sin no more." Christ came not to destroy, but to fulfil. The only condemnation Christ speaks of is loss of opportunity; that, when light has come into the world, some men choose darkness, and so lose the light.

The Puritans and Quakers tried to unclothe the religion of all its rites and ceremonies. They took off its royal robes of architecture, painting, statuary, music, and left it bare. That was a mistake. They should have exchanged the earthly dress for a higher and more heavenly one.

This is the Christian principle, and it applies in a thousand ways.

Here is a boy who has done wrong. He is a culprit. He has stolen or he has committed some other offence. The law arrests him and puts him in prison. This the law must do, for the business of the law is to prevent offences, to keep them from going on and from getting worse. But the law cannot cure the criminal. It can only stop him in his evil course. After a while, law opens its hand again, and lets the criminal go. He is not cured, so he begins again, and falls into the clutch of law again, and is stopped again, and let go again, and begins again, and so on *ad infinitum*. That is all the law can do,—arrest evil, and check it for a while. It cannot cure it. It is merely negative power. But, to cure evil, a positive power is needed. You must show the boy some good thing. You must attract him toward a better life. You must give him an opportunity for something better. Law takes off for a little while his old clothing of sin. Christianity must clothe him with a house from heaven.

Any home is better than none. If you cannot get a house, take a cabin. If you cannot have a cabin, then have a tent; if not a wall tent, then a shelter tent; if not that, then find a tree or a cave.

Mentally, we do not wish to be unclothed, but clothed upon. Mental progress does not consist in losing the old knowledge, but in adding to it something new. The *principle* of conservatism is a sound one. Keep your present faith till you can gain a better one. The greatest of modern philosophers, Descartes,—the John the Baptist of all modern reform,—emptied his mind of all its belief

in order to begin at the beginning. He started with no belief except in his own existence. "I exist," was all that he would begin with. He thoroughly *unclothed* his mind of all its thoughts. But men are not made to live so. Anything is better than perpetual doubt. We have no mental progress so. "To him who hath shall be given." The man who believes something can go on and believe more. A perpetual seeker, with no past behind him, finds nothing. He is ever searching, and never coming to the knowledge of the truth. Some things we must know, we are made to know them. The New Testament assumes that we know them, and does not teach them. Both Old and New Testament assume the existence of God, duty, and immortality. Some things may be taken for granted in our belief. They cannot be proved, and are not meant to be proved. Man is made to believe them, and cannot help himself. We must believe in our own existence, in the existence of an outer world, of day and night, men and women, space and time, cause and effect, the infinite and the finite, right and wrong, God and nature, duty and immortality. As a good father does not send his child out into the world naked, but gives him a trunk of clothes, a chest of tools, a little money to begin with, so God furnishes us with a mental outfit of common and universal beliefs, to begin with. We are not to be unclothed of them, either in this world or in the next, but clothed upon with more.

All negation is going backward. It may be necessary to go back and to begin again, when we are going wrong. So negative reforms and negative moralities go backward in order to begin again. All the "antis" go backward, even anti-slavery. Society organized on slavery was badly and unjustly organized, but it *was* organized. The abolition of slavery disorganized society, and, if we had stopped there, we should have only taken a backward step, not a forward one. Free labor, therefore, had to be organized instead of slave labor; and, because the Southern States refused to accept free labor and organize it, it had to be done for them by the general government. Failing this, society at the South would have remained "unclothed, not clothed upon."

Look at nature in this affluent season of spring, when the voice of God is saying, "Let there be life." See how nature swallows up the old in the new. See how she absorbs the old vegetation in the coming grasses, how earth, bare and dead, is clothed

upon with new and wonderful forms of growth. Little seeds in the earth have heard God's voice, and begin to stir inwardly. Little buds have heard it, and begin to swell. These million germs of life are to sweep away and clear up the vestiges of decay. Dead leaves and grasses are to feel the new summer. In a few weeks the whole surface of earth will be carpeted with grass and flowers, the trees clothed with delicate, fairy foliage, with fragrant, lovely blossoms, —mortality swallowed up of life, a resurrection of dead nature into a new existence.

The affections are a clothing and a home for the heart. God's method is to give us always better and higher affections, and to make the lower a step upward to the higher. "He who loves not his brother whom he hath seen, how shall he love God whom he hath not seen?" All human love leads up to divine love. It is a Jacob's ladder, leading up to heaven. Everything which draws man out of himself does him good. The smallest act of sympathy helps us. To say a kind word does him good who receives it and him who gives it. I see two little girls walking hand in hand. They are play-mates. They play together, they study together, they quarrel sometimes, but they are little friends. That is the first round of the ladder of love, the highest step of which is the divine piety of Jesus towards his heavenly Father.

I see two young men, fellow-students, seekers of the truth together. They struggle through the same doubts, they have the same bitter experience of evil. They may commit mistakes together, but amid all errors and wanderings there is the golden thread of a generous, unselfish friendship for each other. That is good. Let them never be unclothed from that love, but clothed upon with a higher one.

Much of earthly affection is, no doubt, poor, weak, unworthy. It is idol worship. It is a blind and foolish affection. It is weak and changeable. But, such as it is, it is always better than nothing. Do not destroy it. Fulfil it.

I would be very tender of any idolatry. I often find persons adoring very enthusiastically books or artists or men who to me seem poor and empty. But I am very careful not rudely to criticize their faith. They think some poetaster to be a great poet. Be it so. I will not say a word against it. They are groping after pearls. They think a man a great orator, and burn with enthusiasm for him, while to me he appears only a rhetorician, a man of words. Nevertheless, I say nothing harsh against their

idol. They admire a preacher who to me seems talking verbiage and commonplaces. Well, who knows what real religion may come to them through this channel? We have this treasure in earthen vessels. I will not be an iconoclast, except when it is absolutely necessary. If truth requires me to blow a jarring and dissonant blast, I will do it, but not otherwise. Idolatry, in the divine order, may be the first step to true religion. Let it not be unclothed, but clothed upon.

All love, so far as it is love, is good; and it is good in this way, that it takes us out of ourselves, making us for the time unselfish; and also that it makes us for the time truly pure. Those who love are emancipated from doubts, hesitations, terrors. Perfect love casts out fear. Two friends who are together,—two school-girls, perhaps,—how they talk, how they flow out, how they say all that is in their heart! That does them good, and prepares for something better. With your friends you feel at home. You dread no misconstruction, no censure. You do not have to stop to explain, to define your position, to guard against misconstruction. There is no envy, no jealousy, in that relation. I do not think (as Cicero says) life is worth living that does not contain such a friendship. Every one needs to be able to be with those, sometimes, to whom he can speak of anything he chooses without any doubt or anxiety or hesitation. Then he is at home. That is home, the home of the heart.

So God educates us for himself, teaches us how to love him by teaching us first how to love our brother. All true love educates us for heaven. The love of nature is a nascent piety. The delight in God's sky and land, his ocean and mountains, his stars and flowers, his sunrises and sunsets, educates us to love him, the giver of it all. He sends us little children to teach our hearts tenderness. He takes them up to himself, and our tenderness goes up to heaven. The love for heaven, for books, for children, for friends, leads us towards God. Every patient watching by the bedside of those we love teaches the heart something. Every tear dropped on a friend's grave is another step towards heaven. Every generous effort to do right, every noble struggle against evil, every warm throb of love for what is good, true, fair, every patriotic and courageous act of devotion to our country, is clothing us with a house from heaven.

These may, indeed, be only tents to live in till we reach the promised land; but we know that, when these are struck and folded, we have a building of God waiting us be-

yond the veil of time. God, who provides the tent for us here, will provide the house there. He who gives us in this life the wonders and beauties of nature, the lessons of truth, the opportunities of action and endeavor, the helps of friendship, the charm of love, the nobleness of life and the pathos of death, will provide for us better things beyond, "which eye has not seen, nor ear heard."

Therefore, O human heart, trust and hope and look forward, and do not doubt nor fear, but go from truth to truth, from love to higher love. We do not wish to be unclothed of this world's affections and interests, but clothed upon with higher. This life is not the end, but the beginning. This poor body of ours, poor, but yet wonderful in its mysterious faculties, is the germ of a higher body. The friend who has left us, the dear child, sister, brother, father, mother, we shall meet again; and that divine grace which charmed our heart, when we enter heaven, shall smile on us with a more profound and angelic beauty. The radiance which flowed from those eyes shall be more radiant. The inspiration which dwelt on that brow shall be more inspired. Yet that sublime and heavenly love shall be as tender and near as in this world, a home for our heart as it was below.

—James Freeman Clarke.

THE STILL HOUR.

This is "the Life"! Not that he came again
Into these misty twilights of the earth,
But that he rose at once from death and pain
To Heaven's immortal birth!

This is "the Resurrection"! No mere form
Out of death's gloom an hour's revisit
given,
But the great Life, above earth's change and
storm,
Forever in God's heaven!

O death, that ever followeth after life!
O life, that ever cometh out of death!
Now do we know, in that great ceaseless
strife,
'Tis Life that conquereth!

So "Christ is risen" is not alone *their* strain
Who can receive the ancient word of faith;
But for all hearts that hear, and not in vain,
His gospel—which each spring repeats
again—

Of Life that conquers death.

—Brooke Herford.

We, to-day, dear friends, enter into this region of faith. We also are risen with Christ. We sit in heavenly places with him. For heaven is not a place far off, above the skies, somewhere outside of the orbit of Saturn and Neptune, but it is a world of spiritual life all around us. Christ has abolished death to all who believe in him. Those who believe in him do not die: they go on, they go in, they go up.

While the disciples at Emmaus were talking with their Master, their eyes were opened and they knew him. While we talk with Jesus on this Easter Sunday, our eyes are opened and we know him. He is our friend, —the friend of every soul that needs him. He is the friend of every poor, sinful, broken heart that thinks it has no friend on earth. He is the friend of all who wish to have his help. The true Christ is not in the past, he is here. He is not dead and gone: behold! he is alive forevermore. He has not come merely to give us a right to be with him in some future heaven. He has brought heaven down to us here. He is with us always, even to the end of the world!

Therefore, on this Easter Sunday morning, while its sun shines so brightly around us, let us all thank God and take courage. Let us not look backward, but forward; not downward, but upward; not be desponding, but hopeful. Are there any of us here who feel lonely, bereaved, desolate? Behold! the heavens are opened, and an innumerable company of friends are waiting for you, to welcome you when you go up, and lead you to him who liveth and was dead, and is alive forevermore. Are there any of us who are hesitating to do what we know to be right, not ready yet to do our duty, still postponing till to-morrow what we ought to do to-day? Let us on this bright Easter morning begin to do our work, in full faith that God will enable us to accomplish it in this or in some other world. O weary heart, arise and be strong! Sad soul, be glad to-day, for Christ has arisen. Sinful soul, turn to God and forsake your sins, and be made alive! Take part in the better resurrection, which lifts out of evil into good. Make this day the beginning of a new life, which shall never know any end, but shine brighter to the perfect day.—*Messages of Faith, Hope, and Love.*

SHALL WE KNOW EACH OTHER THERE?

We often read and hear discussions on the question "whether we shall recognize our friends hereafter." How can we ever doubt it? If love abides, are we not to know those whom we love? What would immor-

tality be if we were to be separated from all the loved ones, the knowledge of whom has made the very essence and sweetness of our human life? Would that be immortality if we left behind us the richest part of our souls? The best that is in us has come to us from love to others and their love to us. Let that perish in forgetfulness, and we should go into the other world only half alive. We should have lost the best part of the results of our earthly life. That we should be thus separated from our friends was not the view of the great Teacher. He emphasized in his last wonderful conversation with his disciples that his "going up" was not going away from them. He said, "I go away, and come to you." "I go to prepare a place for you. And, if I go to prepare a place for you, I shall come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also."

Shall we know each other in the other world? Yes, far better than we know each other here. The progress of man implies a more intimate knowledge of his fellow-man. Animals seem to know each other chiefly in their external relations. Man, in his lower state, does not enter very deeply into the souls of those nearest to him. As he ascends, he knows them better. He understands more of their character, hopes, purposes, needs, qualities, defects, and so is able to help them much more effectually. But still how little we know of each other, how difficult is communication, how hard to tell what is within us! How we misunderstand each other! How we misinterpret each other's motives! How seldom comes an hour of real intercourse, when soul speaks to soul! But, in the higher world, I believe we shall enter easily and naturally into the most intimate communion, shall know as we are known. There all disguises and concealments, all diffidence and distrust, shall fall away from the soul; and we shall have the joy, perhaps the highest joy we have known on earth, of coming into intimate union with those we love. The heart-rending misunderstandings of this life will cease. The cruelties born of ignorance will be no more. The harsh, cold, bitter judgments we pass on each other will be left behind.

If, in a long life here, I have gained anything which is worth keeping, it is the knowledge and friendship and love of pure, generous, noble souls. Am I to lose that great inheritance? Am I to go into the other world poor, lonely, homesick, alone? I do not so understand the lessons of experience

or the facts of observation. When all other memory fades from the mind of the dying, when his other thoughts are bewildered, the other impressions of time effaced, he still shows by a faint pressure of the hand, by a feeble sign of his head, that his love remains. The last look of the dim eye seeks the faces of those he loves. The last faint whisper of the failing voice is a murmur of blessing on those dear ones. Love is stronger than death: will it not survive the grave?

Yes: when I open my eyes on a new world, I expect to come once more into the company of those who have been my inspiration, my comfort, my joy in this life. I shall learn what these years have been teaching them, and they shall be again my friendly companions and helpers. I shall see again the parents and the dear children whose love has sweetened my life. I shall be a little child once more myself. Yes, and I hope to come very near to my master, Jesus, and to have my errors corrected, and be taught the alphabet of a higher language of truth. Not all at once, for the laws of gradation and limitation will apply there as here. But, if faith and hope and love abide, then there will be always more of knowledge, more of work, and more of love in that divine beyond.—*The Old and New View of the Hereafter.*

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB.

[Send all offers and requests for this department to Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 80 Goffe Street, Quincy, Mass.]

Please remember, when you see a request for a book in the Book Club, to write a card to Mrs. Nichols, asking "Shall I send such a book to such a person?" before sending it, else the person who requests it may receive several copies. When any one writes directly to you, asking for a book offered by you, send a card to Mrs. Nichols saying that you have sent it. When you receive more requests than you can meet, send these to the Book Club to be printed here.

OFFERS.

"Black Beauty" is offered by Miss Bertha Langmaid, 2 Gordon Terrace, Brookline, Mass.

Any one willing to pay freight on a barrel of magazines can receive the same by applying to Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 80 Goffe Street, Quincy, Mass.

The Cambridge Branch offers the following books. Address Miss M. A. Vinal, 20 Lowell Street, Cambridge, Mass. "In the Child's World"; "Our Country," Josiah Strong; "Dr. Le Baron and his Daughters," "Betty Alden," J. G. Austin; "The Master of Ballantrae"; "The Christian's Secret of

a Happy Life"; "Small Talks about Business"; "With Uncle John in France"; "The House of Seven Gables," Hawthorne; "Two Years Ago," Kingsley; "Child's Garden of Verse," Stevenson; "Tommy and Grizel," Barrie; "History of the United States," Scudder; "Plutarch's Lives"; "Utopia," More; "The Altar at Home"; "Christian Days and Thoughts"; "Up from the Cape"; "Transformation"; "Posies for Children"; "Sentimental Tommy"; "Tom Brown at Oxford."

Address Miss C. L. Murdock, 320 Allston Street, Boston, Mass., Boulevard Station, for: "The Whittier Birthday Book"; "An Attic Philosopher in Paris"; "The Story of Exploration and Adventure in Africa"; "Battles of America, in Words of one Syllable," Josephine Pollard; "Under Drake's Flag," G. A. Henty; "Last Days of Pompeii," Lytton; "Topsy and Turvys," Peter S. Newell; "Yellow and White," W. C. Davis; "Commodore Paul Jones," Cyrus Townsend Brady; "Prisoners and Captives," S. S. Merriman; "Children of All: Their Homes and their Playgrounds"; "Poems," Oliver Wendell Holmes; "Ten Nights in a Bar Room," T. S. Arthur; "Short Stories," Helen H. Gardner; "The Mutineer, a Romance of Pitcairn Island"; "The Stories Marjorie Told"; "Short Stories," by Lanoe Falconer; "The Arabian Nights' Entertainments"; "Ruth the Moabitess" (dramatic cantata); "Part Songs" (for three or four female voices); "Off to the Klondyke," Gordon Stables; "Family Encyclopædia" (small volume); "Holy Bible" (good-sized print); "On Tower Island"; "Hymn Book" (without music); "Hymn and Tune Book" (two copies); "The Sphinx's Lawyer"; *Good Housekeeping* (1909); "Service Book and Hymnal"; "Wreck of the Grosvenor"; "Sunday School Harmonics."

REQUESTS.

Those who write to us for the first time must send the name and address of a minister as a reference. Without that the request will not be printed.

1. It has been some time since I heard from the *Cheerful Letter* friends, and I would be glad to be remembered by them again. I live in the country and away from any church, and very seldom go anywhere, and would like to get something to read, and something for my two little boys, some used post cards, or anything for them to read. I

am poor, and cannot buy any reading for them. Mrs. Avie Turner, R. R. 1, Box 72 A, Palestine, Texas.

2. It has been many years, some eight or ten, since I last wrote to the *Cheerful Letter*. I was a girl then, and had formed many corresponding acquaintances whom I loved and admired very much. Two of them I heard from for many years, but in some way have lost them. I was Miss Verna Scharbrough before married. Have been married six years. I should be glad to join the *Cheerful Letter* Exchange again, as I once loved its members and the work it was doing. I would appreciate any reading matter, religious works, and periodicals of any kind. I especially enjoy the different magazines. Should also like a fashion magazine, *McCall's*, *Delineator*, *Standard* fashions, or any kind. I should also like and enjoy letters from any one, for I am quite lonely. Wishing the *Cheerful Letter* and its workers many blessings for the good work they are doing, I remain as of old, Mrs. Joe Owen, Athens, Texas, R. D. 2, Box 58.

3. Miss Annie Milican, Lacon, Alabama, R. R. 1, Box 31, will be glad of magazines.

4. Rev. R. Fletcher Gray of Vinemont, Alabama, sends the following names for good reading. Some of the parties have young people who are interested in good literature: Mrs. G. A. Hickman, Mrs. Rose Bland, Mrs. Dalee Miller, Mrs. William Freeman, Mrs. S. E. Winton, all of Cullman, Alabama.

5. Mrs. Maud Patterson, Spencer, Virginia, R. R. 2, will be glad of any reading.

6. Mrs. Topsy Hunter, Lamar, Indiana, asks for any reading.

7. Mrs. Hartley James, New Gloucester, Maine, will be grateful for reading, which she will gladly pass on. Mrs. James is a "shut-in."

8. Mrs. Lillie B. Davis, Shiloh, New Jersey, asks for two or three up-to-date Sunday-school songs for little folks.

9. Mrs. Bennett Lewis, Athens, Texas, R. F. D. No. 1, living twelve miles from the railroad, asks for reading, picture books, or used cards for her family, consisting of husband and three daughters, six, five, and two years of age, Mrs. Bennett and one girl

just getting up from pneumonia. She will enjoy and appreciate anything that may be sent her.

10. Mrs. Herbert Russell, Buckfield, Maine, R. F. D. 2, is a great sufferer from rheumatism, with no hope of ever being better. Reading will be very welcome to her.

11. Mrs. Jennie L. Pleasants, Pedlar's Mills, Virginia, writes she is much in need of cheer this winter.

12. Rev. C. F. Dykeman, Dakota, Minnesota, asks for "Unitarianism," a course of sixteen lectures, given in Boston in 1888-89.

THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL.

A GOOD TEACHER.

Until I was ten years old, I received most of my tuition from my grandfather Freeman.* After breakfast each morning, he taught my elder brother and sister and me in Latin, Greek, and mathematics. I did not know at the time what a wonderful teacher he was. He anticipated, sixty years ago, the best methods of modern instruction. In the first place he made our studies interesting to us. Next he removed all unnecessary difficulties, and only required us to learn what was essential. The Latin Grammar which we studied was only twenty or thirty pages in length.† It was called "Latin Accidence," and contained the Parts of Speech, the Declensions, and Conjugations, and a few of the principal rules of Syntax. The larger grammar was not to be committed to memory, but to be used like a dictionary, for consultation. The more important Latin words we learned by heart from a "Vocabulary," and the more important Greek words from a small book called "Greek Primitives." Thus provided, we immediately began to translate some interesting story in Nepos or Ovid. He kept up our interest by talking to us about it, explaining the difficult passages, and, when it was in verse, repeating it so as to bring out the rhythm and melody. When we came to a word we did not understand, he would tell us the meaning, but required us to repeat

it again and again till he was sure we remembered it. To those who thought that this method made study too easy, and that it did not discipline the mind, he answered: "The study of a foreign language can never be made too easy. There are always difficulties enough in it. But what mental discipline is there in turning over the pages of a dictionary? I tell these children the meaning of a word, just as the dictionary does; but I save them the time lost in the merely manual operation of turning over the leaves. Real discipline comes to the mind when it acts, not languidly, but with its full energy, and it acts with energy only when it is interested in what it does. Therefore, as soon as I am unable to keep up their interest in what they do, I turn their attention to something else or send them out to play." The excellence of this method may be seen in the fact that before I was ten years old I had read a good deal of Ovid, some odes of Horace, a little of Virgil, the Gospel of Matthew in Greek, and had gone as far as Cubic Equations in algebra. I also had read through the "History of the United States," Hume's "England," Robertson's "Scotland," Ferguson's and Gibbon's "Rome." I can repeat to-day, after sixty years, many passages of Ovid and at least three odes of Horace, which I committed to memory before I was ten. Nor was I aware that I was doing a great deal, for the study was made almost as entertaining as play. Problems in arithmetic and algebra were treated as a kind of game. I once met with the term "trigonometry," and asked my grandfather the meaning of the word. "Trigonometry," said he, "is a wonderful science. It is all about triangles." "What is a triangle?" said I. "I will show you," he replied, and proceeded to draw on a slate a number of triangles, showing me that each had three sides and three angles, and explaining that, if we knew three of these (one being a side), we could find the other three. He told me that by that law we could tell the distances of the planets and the moon. Then he took me out upon the lawn and showed me a tall tree, and explained how by trigonometry I could tell the height of the tree. Thereupon I made myself a little quadrant out of a shingle, and proceeded to measure the height of the trees and houses around me. Though the actual results were probably far from accurate, yet by this little experiment I obtained a very clear notion of the great foundation laws of mathematical astronomy. And I learned this in play. Such studies left plenty of time for outdoor exercise. With

* Almost my first recollection as a child is of one who seemed to me then to be old, who was the friend of all. In the morning he worked in his garden, and we played by his side; in the forenoon, while he read and wrote, we children studied our lessons under his guidance; as the twilight darkened, he gathered us around him to tell during successive evenings the story of Ulysses, of Sir Huon, of Kehama and Thalaba. As we grew older, we learned to understand the quality of his benignity, his generosity, his manly independence, his sagacious wisdom, his purity, humility, and loyalty to all truth and right.—*J. F. C. at Centennial of James Freeman.*

† The Editor still owns this Grammar. It is all in manuscript, written by Dr. Freeman for his grandchildren.

my brothers and cousins I learned to ride on horseback with and without a saddle, to swim, to skate, to make bows and arrows and slings, and shoot with them, and to practise all the other athletic sports which boys love. We went to find distant ponds and rivers in which to catch perch and pickerel, and we even rediscovered the speckled trout in some brooks whence they had been thought to have disappeared long before. What happy hours we passed roaming through the woods, clambering over ledges of gray rock, or floating in boats on the omnipresent Charles River which nearly encircled Newton! Amid these studies and amusements there was still time enough for reading. First, when young, we had Miss Edgeworth,—her stories not being bound together under the forbidding title of "Parent's Assistant," but in separate tales, each to be read by itself and read again,—“Simple Susan,” “The Little Merchants,” “Old Poz,” “Eton Montem,” etc. Then, too, Walter Scott was writing his novels, and, whenever a new one appeared, it was brought from Boston, and read aloud in the family circle. I recollect that, when “Ivanhoe” came, I eagerly seized it, and became so absorbed in the story of the tournament that I hid under a bed, and refused to hear the call to study till I had seen the Black Knight and Ivanhoe triumphant in the lists of Ashby-de-la-Zouche. I still think that there are no novels like those,—so full of character, adventure, picturesque incident, and with such an atmosphere of sunshine and good health throughout. Under that magic pen, history became living, and the past was present. *We* were the crusaders, *we* the outlaws, *we* the hesitating heroes of the Waverley novels, who always seemed in an interesting dilemma, not quite able to decide between the two ways. Each Waverley novel was a new joy. And so Scott's poems were full of delight and cheer. Their lyric flow, their manly tone, their generous sentiment, lifted us into a blessed region of ideal beauty. I remember, when I was at the Latin School, I spent my half-holiday one Saturday reading “Marmion” for the first time. As the sun was setting, I reached the end of the poem, and in the farewell verses read with astonishment these lines:—

“To thee, dear schoolboy, whom my lay
Has cheated of thy hour of play,
Light task and merry holiday!”

and it seemed as if Scott were close beside me, talking to me in person.—*Autobiography of James Freeman Clarke, edited by Edward Everett Hale.*

NATURAL HISTORY.

WELCOME THE BIRDS.

As soon as spring comes, we begin to think about the birds. We watch for a sight of robin and listen for the sweet, far-away song of the bluebird. These little friends that have been away from us for so long promise much of joys to come.

The time was, when little birds counted among their enemies not only owls, snakes, cats, and many animals of field and wood, but also thoughtless young persons. Fortunately for our happier springtime, the birds not only do not need to count children among their enemies, but they can count on them to protect them from enemies. Young persons are getting to know the birds better, to realize how helpful they are and what a joy they are. They are doing much to protect and help them in their home life, so that the song birds will increase instead of decrease.

It was my good fortune last summer to be associated with a club of two hundred and fifty boys. These lads were real boys. They could play baseball, swim, run races, play tennis, sail boats, and do all sorts of things that real live boys enjoy. I told them one day about a little song-sparrow's nest near their club building, because I saw the little home was in danger of being stepped on. It would have interested you to see how these lads took care of that little nest. They did not even let grown folks go near it, lest the mother bird might be disturbed and lest we might have one song-sparrow less that summer. I was pleased to find this kind attitude to the birds so strong among the large number of boys. I believe it is the growing spirit among young people of to-day, and now I rarely find a child who cares to make a collection of birds' eggs or birds' wings. Such collections do not amount to anything, while the birds are both useful and a delight to every one.

Some young folks say that they do not know the birds; yet when I ask, “Do you not know a robin, a bluebird, a woodpecker, a chickadee, a nuthatch, a sparrow, and a crow?” they nearly always know them all. I wish every boy or girl who reads this leaflet would write in a note-book the names of the birds with which he is familiar, and try to see how many he can come to know during the coming spring and summer. This study of birds will be a great and growing interest and pleasure to you.

It is well to know something of bird habits and homes as well as to know the names of

the birds. If you are careful in your study of the nesting habits, you will not disturb the parent birds. Go alone when you want to observe the nest, take a quick peep, and then quietly leave the little family. Last summer some young people and I watched a family of goldfinches. The goldfinches soon grew accustomed to our visits, and did not seem to mind us in the least. The children gave food to the mother, and I think she found it quite profitable to have such guests. As to the young goldfinches, when they appeared, they had not the least fear of us. We would carefully pull down the branch on which the nest was placed, and the little youngsters peeped out at us in the most unconcerned way. One of them used to stand up on his brothers so as to get a better view or, perchance, something to eat. Of course, we were very quiet when we were about the nest and we did not remain long near it. We were silent as we approached the tree, and I am sure the little mother goldfinch considered us very peaceable folk and not at all likely to do her harm.

As I look back on the things that gave me pleasure when I was a little girl, I think the birds come first. I always loved to have a robin come back again with the warm weather, to get a glimpse of a bluebird, to watch Jennie Wren, and to hear the sweet notes of a meadow-lark. I enjoyed, too, the little downy woodpecker that I could see both winter and summer. He was always busy helping the farmers by getting all the insects he could out of their trees, and I am sorry to say he was very often abused by the farmers who did not know anything about bird life. They thought he was injuring the tree, when he was in truth a most valuable farm hand. Our boys and girls of to-day are learning to know birds, and they will not make such mistakes. — *Alice McCloskey.*

"THE CHURCH OF THE GALILEANS."

The Church of the Galileans, as it is called, is even humbler in outside pretensions than the Church of Saint Polycarp. Like that it is open to all comers. The stranger who approaches it looks down a quiet street and sees the plainest of chapels, — a kind of wooden tent, that owes whatever grace it has to its pointed windows and the high, sharp roof, — traces, both, of that upward movement of ecclesiastical architecture which soared aloft in cathedral spires, shooting into the sky as the spike of

the flowering aloe from the cluster of broad, sharp-wedged leaves below. This suggestion of mediæval symbolism, aided by a minute turret, in which a hand-bell might have hung and found just room enough to turn over, was all of outward show the small edifice could boast. Within there was very little that pretended to be attractive. A small organ at one side and a plain pulpit showed that the building was a church; but it was a church reduced to its simplest expression.

Yet when the great and wise monarch of the East sat upon his throne, in all the golden blaze of the spoils of Ophir and the freights of the navy of Tarshish, his glory was not like that of this simple chapel in its Sunday garniture. For the lilies of the field in their season, and the fairest flowers of the year in due succession, were clustered every Sunday morning over the preacher's desk. Slight, thin-tissued blossoms of pink and blue and virgin white in early spring, then the full-breasted and deep-hearted roses of summer, then the velvet-robed crimson and yellow flowers of autumn, and in the winter delicate exotics that grew under skies of glass in the false summers of our crystal palaces without knowing that it was the dreadful winter of New England which was rattling the doors and frosting the panes, — the whole year told its history of life and growth and beauty from that simple desk. There was always at least one good sermon, — this floral homily. There was at least one good prayer, — that brief space when all were silent, after the manner of the Friends at their devotions.

Here, too, Iris found an atmosphere of peace and love. The same gentle, thoughtful faces, the same cheerful but reverential spirit, the same quiet, the same life of active benevolence. But in all else how different from the Church of Saint Polycarp! No clerical costume, no ceremonial forms, no carefully trained choirs. A liturgy they have, to be sure, which does not scruple to borrow from the time-honored manuals of devotion, but also does not hesitate to change its expressions to its own liking.

Perhaps the good people seem a little easy with each other, — they are apt to nod cheerfully, and have even been known to whisper before the minister came in. But it is a relief to get rid of that old Sunday — no, *Sabbath* — face, which suggests the idea that the first day of the week is commemorative of some most mournful event. The truth is, these people meet very much as a family does for its devotions, not putting off their humanity in the least, — considering it on the whole quite a cheerful matter to

come together for prayer and song and good counsel from kind and wise lips. And, if they are freer in their demeanor than some very precise congregations, they have not the air of a worldly set of people. Clearly, they have *not* come to advertise their tailors and milliners, nor for the sake of exchanging criticisms on the literary character of the sermon they may hear. There is no restlessness and no restraint among this quiet, cheerful people. One thing that keeps them calm and happy during the season so evidently trying to many congregations is that they join very generally in the singing. In this way they get rid of that accumulated nervous force which escapes in all sorts of fidgety movements, so that a minister trying to keep his congregation still reminds one of a boy with his hand over the nose of a pump which another boy is working,—this spurting impatience of the people is so like the jets that find their way through his fingers, and the grand rush out at the final Amen! has such a wonderful likeness to the gush that takes place when the boy pulls his hand away, with such immense relief, as it seems, to both the pump and the officiating youngster.

How sweet is this blending of all voices and all hearts in one common song of praise! Some will sing a little loud, perhaps, and now and then an impatient chorister will get a syllable or two in advance, or an enchanted singer to lose all thought of time and place in the luxury of a closing cadence that he holds on to the last semi-breve upon his private responsibility; but how much more of the spirit of the old Psalmist in the music of these imperfectly trained voices than in the academic niceties of the paid performers who take our musical worship out of our hands.—*O. W. Holmes, in "The Professor at the Breakfast Table."*

AMUSEMENT COLUMN.

[Address everything relating to the Amusement Column to Mr. Henry A. Jenks, Canton Corner, Mass. Contributors are requested to write on one side of the paper only. Write name and address plainly (not necessarily for publication), and send the answers to the puzzles on a separate slip of paper.]

We regret that by accident puzzle No. III. in the Amusement Column of the February number was not credited to the *Youth's Companion*, a paper from which we often get valuable help, and we always intend to make due acknowledgment.

I.

BIRDS.

1. To steal, and not out.
2. A round piece of timber, and to propel a boat.
3. A vast expanse of salt water, and to cheat or deceive.
4. A monarch, and one who catches fish.
5. A color, and a winged creature.
6. Another color, and another winged creature.—*Every Other Sunday.*

II.

ACROSTIC.

All of the words described contain the same number of letters; and, when rightly guessed and placed one below the other, the diagonal beginning with the upper left-hand letter and ending with the lower right-hand letter will spell the name of a famous river.

1. A city in Georgia.
2. The cup-bearer of Jupiter.
3. A constable in "Much Ado about Nothing."
4. A village near Quebec.
5. An English divine.
6. A President of the United States.
7. A famous German poet.
8. Unsoundness.

III.

A DIAMOND.

1. A consonant.
2. An adverb.
3. A famous general.
4. An adverb.
5. A vowel.

IV.

A USEFUL LETTER.

It can make a short poem into a system of signals.

And make to penetrate into the middle point.

A small insect into an extreme angle.

A period of time into a prison for petty malefactors.

Freedom from toil into to discontinue.

And ancient into frigid.

Answers to Puzzles in the March Number.

I. LITERARY CONTEST.—Coniston, The Pines of Lory, Adam Bede, Mill on the Floss, Lorna Doone, House of the Seven

Gables, Oliver Twist, Tom Sawyer, Hoosier Schoolmaster, Tom Brown of Rugby, David Copperfield.

II. ANAGRAMS.—1. Merrimac. 2. Constitution. 3. Kearsarge. 4. Alabama. 5. Bon Homme Richard. 6. Monitor.

III. BEHEADINGS.—1. Sell—ell. 2. Send—end. 3. Sharp—harp. 4. Soil—oil. 5. State—tate.

IV. STOLEN LETTERS.—1. James Madison. 2. David Livingstone. 3. Rosa Bonheur.

THE EDITOR'S CORNER.

As the birthday of James Freeman Clarke was April 4, 1810, his centennial occurs this month; and we have made this a memorial number.

After the proof had gone to the printer, we found that the birthday of Edmund H. Sears, which occurred the same year, also took place in April (April 6). A hymn by Mr. Sears and an extract from his book, "Foregleams of Immortality," were printed last month. We shall print more extracts from Mr. Sears's writings, in succeeding numbers, for the whole year is an anniversary.

The article by Dr. Holmes, "The Church of the Galileans" is a description of the Church of the Disciples in Indiana Place, Boston, of which Mr. Clarke was pastor.

L. F. C.

THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE.

OBJECTS.

1. To cheer and comfort the lonely and discouraged—not only invalids, but all who need cheer and comfort—by the interchange of letters and by gifts of books and periodicals.

2. To supply in some measure to young people in remote places the lack of schools, by gifts of school-books, letters, and, for those who desire it, correspondence classes on history, the natural sciences, and other interesting branches of study. If any desire to join such classes, they may send their names to our secretary.

3. Also to supply, to some extent, the lack of a church. One good sermon or sermon extract is printed in each number of the paper. These sermons are never doctrinal, but practical, and intended to cheer and comfort the sorrowful and aid in giving a vital religion without regard to sect or creed.

IMPORTANT NOTICES.

Headquarters of the Cheerful Letter Exchange are at 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass. The secretary, Mrs. L. B. Porter, may be found there on Mondays, Thursdays, and Fridays.

There will be a meeting of the Cheerful Letter Exchange on Friday, April 1, at 25 Beacon Street, Boston, at 10.30 A.M. All interested are cordially invited to be present.

The Home Study Work of the Cheerful Letter Exchange offers to help those who wish to improve their education. Lessons will be given in all subjects which can be taught by correspondence, such as Arithmetic, Book-keeping, Algebra, all branches of English, History, Botany, Geography, Languages, Drawing, etc.

Requests for these lessons should be sent to Mrs. Annie F. Hudson, 2 Maple Place, Jamaica Plain, Mass.

THE ATTENTION OF ALL READERS OF "THE CHEERFUL LETTER" IS CALLED TO THE FOLLOWING NOTICE:—

It is a rule of the Cheerful Letter Exchange that no one may ask for money, clothing, or other articles, except books and magazines.

The name of any person who fails to obey this rule will be dropped from our list. Any worker receiving such a request should send the letter at once to Headquarters.

The Editor asks POSTMASTERS who send notices of changes of address not to send these notices to the Editor, but to the Secretary, at 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

Send requests for books and letters of thanks to the Book Club Secretary.

Any subscriber not receiving the paper regularly is requested to notify the Secretary.

Chairman, Miss Helen L. Bayley, 399 Broadway, Cambridge, Mass.

Editor of "The Cheerful Letter," Miss L. Freeman Clarke, 91 Mt. Vernon Street, Boston, Mass.

Book Club Secretary, Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 80 Goffe Street, Quincy, Mass.

Secretary, Mrs. Lily Blunt Porter, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.